

Program: "Monitor" - 5:30 PM

CUBAN EXILE INTERVIEWED

CPYRGHT

HAL MARCH: "Monitor News Editor, Jim Holton, is across the studio right now with another gentleman; and he's signaling for the mike. Before I switch to Jim, let me set the scene. His guest is a Cuban refugee with a military background. I had the pleasure of speaking a few moments before he went on. Now, with Monitor News Special, here's Jim Holton, who will introduce his guest.

"Jim."

HOLTON: "Hal, I've got with me Captain Santiago Perez. Is that correct?"

PEREZ: "Correct."

HOLTON: "Now Captain, you tell me what the situation is in Cuba?"

PEREZ: "Well, the situation, Mr. Holton, is very serious right now, because there's lots of organizations here; and none of these people want to get together-- everybody wants to be a general. That's the situation right now.

"Right now I'm organizing a great group of pilots. But the only thing is this: I'm not trying to separate nobody. Anybody who knows how to fly an airplane is welcome, no matter whether that person or that pilot in particular was flying for the last regime of Batista. The question is: get Castro out of power immediately."

HOLTON: "Let me ask you this, Captain. There is so much confusion about the various groups -- the various anti-Castro groups -- what is the name of your group? I understand that you are appointed as of today."

PEREZ: "The OLAC (?) The OLAC is a big organization which gave me the honor of organizing this group of pilots. And my mission is going to be to keep Cuba in communication (?)."

HOLTON: "Well, what about the other various anti-Castro groups?"

PEREZ: "Well, the 25th of this month we're going to Washington, and we hope that everybody will get together. But even so, if some people don't get together, my group of pilots is going to give support to these people, as long as they want to go to Cuba and fight -- well-organized."

HOLTON: "How many pilots have you got?"

PEREZ: "Well, so far, I've only got around 18 pilots."

HOLTON: "What are your pilots going to contact there -- should ask this question?"

PEREZ: "You mean, to direct these pilots?"

HOLTON: "Well, yes -- for this movement, or whatever..."

PEREZ: "Well, Victor Manuel Pomequey. He was in charge of three provinces in Cuba, and he's over here in the United States right now. So I'm planning to get all the cooperation from all these organizations. And my idea is this: we have to have -- we have to get -- the Cuban -- the former Cuban army -- reorganized in the United States. Because..."

HOLTON: "The Batista -- Batista's army?"

PEREZ: "Well, they weren't exactly Batista's army. They were the army for the Republic of Cuba. And they have good training. And these people were not supposed to think whether they were working for Batista or not. We are all Cubans; and we have to get together no matter what."

PEREZ: "Well -- (LAUGHS) -- there's a lot of mistakes been made. As a matter of fact, the exiles -- the people in exile -- now call the CIA the Cuban Information Agency."

HOLTON (LAUGHING): "Well, what's going to happen this Wednesday?"

PEREZ: "This Wednesday? Well, we'll see what happens."

HOLTON: "What's Castro going to say?"

PEREZ: "He can say a lot of things."

HOLTON: "We have some information that he's going to -- for one thing-- he's going to announce that all the prisoners are released: they can go back to the United States, go wherever they want."

PEREZ: "I don't think so. I don't think so."

HOLTON: "Also he -- well we've been told -- that he also is going to call for a free election."

PEREZ: "Well, I don't think so either, because, you see Cuba is under the worst dictatorship we ever had -- the Communists -- they destroyed our society."

HOLTON: "Who do you think is really the boss in Cuba?"

PEREZ: "In Cuba?"

HOLTON: "Yes."

PEREZ: "It's only three names: Raul, Fidel, and Che."

HOLTON: "Who's the big boss?"

PEREZ: "Raul and Che. Fidel is a puppet."

HOLTON: "You knew Fidel, for a long time?"

PEREZ: "Yes, as a matter of fact, I was first fighting with him." (?)

HOLTON: "What's your opinion about how long the present regime in Cuba will last?"

PEREZ: "If these all people get together here, the present regime will last two months -- definitely. For that you can take my word."

HOLTON: "Thank you, Captain Santiago Perez."

PEREZ: "Thank you, sir."

HOLTON: "And Hal, that's a very interesting story."

MARCHK: "Indeed it is, Jim, and many, many thanks."